

**Presentation to the
House Health Policy Committee
May 12, 2015**

Good morning Chairman Callton and Health Policy Committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts this morning and make some initial recommendations related to improving the health of Michigan citizens.

My name is James J Tighe and I am the President and CEO of the Michigan Fitness Foundation which is home to the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports.

We have a great team at the Michigan Fitness Foundation that is recognized across the state and nationally for their expertise on policy, systems and environmental change. We are all here this morning to be collaborative resources and answer any questions you may have following the presentation.

- Marci Scott, Vice President of Health Programs,
- Mike Maisner, Vice President of Active Communities and
- Meg Ackerman, Director of Safe Routes to School.

In addition, we are very proud of our partnerships across the state. I want to thank our state agency and community partners for their collaboration and continued support in our work together to build a healthier Michigan.

Slide 2 Agenda

This morning we will focus our agenda on the following:

- Overview of the Michigan Fitness Foundation
- Healthier Outcomes for Michigan
- Obesity Prevention Policy Legislation
- Policy Recommendations

Slide 3 Michigan Fitness Foundation Overview

Michigan Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports was established by Executive Order in 1992 to improve the health of and increase physical activity among Michigan residents. The Michigan Fitness Foundation was established in 1994 as a 501(c)(3).

Our Vision is to cultivate a culture of health to transform the status quo and improve the health of all Michiganders.

Our Mission is to inspire active lifestyles and healthy food choices through: Education, Environmental Change, Community Events, and Policy Leadership.

We strive to meet people where they are and invest in local resources and locally grown programs to develop sustainable capacity for improving health. To accomplish this mission we focus on three core areas: Education, Built Environment and Personal Responsibility.

Which we call, Teach, Build, Move.

Slide 4 Michigan Fitness Foundation – Teach

Our work focuses on nutrition and physical education resources and learning opportunities to inform consumers of all ages on healthy food choices and the benefits of physical activity.

Education and personal responsibility are critical components of any program to reduce obesity and achieving healthy outcomes.

SNAP-ED – We partner with the US Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services as one of the implementing agencies for the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Grant Program (aka SNAP-Ed).. As a primary prevention program, the goal of SNAP-Ed is to improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP will make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles thereby reducing or postponing the onset of chronic diseases and obesity. We administer about 60% of this programming across the state through thousands of community partnerships which allow us to reach over 4 million Michigan citizens. to cultivate sustainable capacity for these programs.

Michigan Harvest of the Month – Ready to use educational tools and resources that work in in a variety of venues. schools, community centers, places of worship, grocery stores and farmers markets – encouraging healthy, delicious cooking and eating, helping families become more self-sufficient and supporting Michigan's agricultural economy.

Act4Health – An innovative, digital link to health care and service providers, connecting older adults with local and online education resources.

Choices Conference – A conference providing professional development, networking, resources and information to those who bring nutrition, health and wellness information to Michigan citizens of all ages.

Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum – CDC Award Winning physical literacy and activity program for grades K-12 designed to strengthen practice, perception and impact of PE in schools.

PE-Nut – Physical Education and Nutrition Education working together in a whole-school approach to being physically active and eating healthier foods.

Slide 5 Michigan Fitness Foundation – Build

Beyond education, we focus on the built environment. Active Communities are places where people, families and businesses can more easily integrate healthy eating choices and physical activities into their daily lives. We collaborate to develop innovative and sustainable approaches to:

Improve active transportation options like walking, biking, and public transportation;

Improve access to locally grown foods;

Focus on community development and integration of grassroots initiatives to enhance quality of life and create safe, economically vibrant places to live and be active.

Map to Healthy Living – Helps users find, visualize and share useful information about food, nutrition and physical activity resources in their communities.

Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance – As a statewide voice for trails, we develop and promote an interconnected statewide system of trails, including the Iron Belle Trail that will stretch from Belle Isle to Ironwood. Michigan has more trail miles than any state in the nation and they are essential for recreation, health, transportation, and economic development.

Point of Access – Improving families' shopping, cooking and eating experiences, creating and increasing long-term demand for Pure Michigan fruits and vegetables.

Promoting Active Communities and Healthy Workplaces – A community and organizational assessment tool to evaluate the built environment, policies and programs so people can more easily integrate healthy eating choices and physical activity into their daily lives.

Safe Routes to School – In partnership with the Michigan Department of Transportation, we assist schools and communities develop and implement the engineering, education, encouragement, and evaluation efforts that help students walk and bike to school.

Since 2008, hundreds of schools have completed the planning process and been awarded Safe Routes to School grants. Forty are currently engaged in planning process. It is a simple way for schools to assist children to get exercise, improve academic performance and improve overall health. And when school districts embrace and institutionalize the program, it can make a substantial difference in the lives students and families.

Slide 6 Michigan Fitness Foundation – Move

Regular Physical activity is one of the single most important things you can do for your health. Inspiring Michiganders of all ages and all abilities to be physically active and to participate in community based events is an important part of our mission.

Pure Michigan Fitness Series – In partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, we host and endorse over 430 physical fitness events, annually, that emphasize health and wellness opportunities including:

- NAIAS Auto Show Shuffle 5K
- Mackinac Bridge Labor Day Run
- Michigander Bicycle Tour
- Wins for Warriors Detroit 9K – Veterans with Invisible Wounds of War (PTSD & TBI)

ACES (All Children Exercise Simultaneously) – Over 300,000 Michigan students in hundreds of Michigan schools walk, dance, run, jump and bike to school during this annual event in May. In addition, this year we hosted over 1000 students at two venues: UM and CMU.

Governor's Fitness Awards – Our signature Annual Event honoring inspirational individuals, companies and communities that make extraordinary commitments to health and wellness. Two weeks ago at Ford Field, we recognized community and state leaders that are truly making a difference to improve the health of Michiganders.

In addition, we highlighted several individuals for their commitment and perseverance, like Hunter Gandee that walked 40 miles carrying his brother Braden to raise awareness for Cerebral Palsy. Truly an inspirational event.

Slide 7 Michigan Fitness Foundation – Programming

In all, the Michigan Fitness Foundation is active in all 83 counties and reaches 4 million Michiganders. Some may view this as a lot, but given the state of healthcare costs associated with obesity and chronic illness, we have a strong belief that this work is vital to improving the health across the state.

To accomplish our mission, public-private and community partnerships are extremely important. Although we administer federal programs from the USDA and DOT in partnership with state agencies, we receive no direct state funding. We recognize the tough economic decisions we face as a state, and want to continue to stress the importance of these programs to provide nutrition education, physical activity, and improvements in our built environment to achieve healthier outcomes.

This morning we have provided each of you a map that highlights where we support some of this programming in each of your districts. These maps include:

- SNAP-ED Program Locations
- ACES Day Participating Schools
- Pure Michigan Fitness Series Events
- Safe Routes to School Awardees

We invite you to help us highlight these great community based programs in each of your districts and continue to share these best practices.

If you would like further information regarding our programs, we have also provide a copy of our most recent annual report and invite you to visit us at www.michiganfitness.org.

Slide 8 Improving Healthy Outcomes in Michigan

As Americans, we are eating away from the home more and more, we drive more, we walk less, and our occupations on average require less physical activity. In addition, portion sizes and sugar/fat content in foods are significantly higher as we reach for fast food options to accommodate our busy lifestyles. These factors and more are driving a significant increase in caloric intake and reductions in energy expenditure resulting in an energy imbalance.

The result is that nearly one in three children in Michigan are overweight or obese. In the past 35 years obesity in Michigan children aged 6-11 has increased almost five-fold.

We are facing an obesity epidemic and sky-rocketing healthcare costs for the associated chronic illnesses across this country and especially here in Michigan. Let's consider a few facts:

- Childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- 75 percent of all healthcare costs are spent on the treatment of chronic diseases, many of which are preventable, and is estimated to cost us \$147 billion per year. Chronic diseases cost the U.S. an additional \$1 trillion each year in lost productivity. (Trust for America's Health)

Let's consider a few facts related to chronic disease:

- The estimated cost of physical inactivity in 2007 in Michigan was \$12.65 billion. (The Economic Cost of Physical Inactivity in Michigan, David Chenoweth, Ph.D., FAWHP)
- Students with poor nutrition and low levels of physical fitness are more likely to be absent and tardy. (Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine, 1998)
- Community-based physical activity interventions designed to promote more active lifestyles among adults are cost-effective in reducing heart disease, stroke, colorectal cancer, breast cancer and type 2 diabetes. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

There is no single solution to this complex problem. It requires commitment and collaboration from all sectors, from everyone in this room.

- Personal Responsibility
- Top-down from corporations
- Government interventions
- Bottom-up community based programs

Education and personal responsibility for making the healthy choice are critical, but alone are not enough to reverse current trends. We must go further by changing the default choices through cultural and environmental changes. We must work together to make the default choice the healthy choice.

We believe that the demand exists and that policy can make a significant difference in improving the health of Michiganders. Here are a few recommendations.

Slide 9 Physical Activity in Schools

One way to address the childhood obesity epidemic would be to expand the quantity of quality physical education being offered in grades K-8 in Michigan. The Michigan school code currently has no minimum requirements. As a result, there is a huge disparity in the amount of physical education being offered from district to district..

- Michigan SBE recommends all public schools offers 150 minutes of PE per week at the elementary level and 225 minutes per week at the secondary level. This is in line with the National guidance.
- Recommends at least 30 min of moderate to vigorous PA during the school day, outside PE Class.
- This includes 20 min of scheduled recess and/or daily periods of PA breaks incorporated throughout the day.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in October 2008, recommended 60 minutes of age-appropriate, enjoyable and varied daily, moderate-to-vigorous physical activity for children.

NASPE recommends, 30 minutes per day or 150 minutes per week of physical education for elementary school students and 225 minutes per week for middle and high school students

According to NASPE, 13 states (over 25%) currently have a adopted mandatory requirements for Physical Activity, 3 in the last reported year. including Arkansas, Hawaii, Iowa, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, Nevada, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas. The trend is positive and Michigan can be the next.

As an example, Colorado, with the lowest childhood obesity rate, requires a minimum of 600 minutes of Physical Activity per month. In addition, Charter schools must adopt and implement the PA policy as well.

Other examples of new legislation on PA requirements include:

- Illinois (2013 IL HR 24) – Adopted, language to “urge” 60 minutes of PA daily
- Massachusetts (2013 HB2634) – Proposed, Establish a minimum 30 minute per day requirement
- Tennessee (HB 9) – Adopted, Established methods for monitoring compliance with 90 minutes of required physical activity per week for elementary and secondary schools.
- New York (2013 NY SB 135) – Proposed a pilot program in a minimum of ten schools to improve PA & PE Programs in schools with at least 50% free or reduced lunches

While some would say that being physically fit is a personal responsibility, it is important to recognize that it is a learned behavior. We don't expect our children to show up at school already knowing how to read. Similarly, we shouldn't expect them to know everything about physical activity, nutrition and lifelong health without being taught. The best place to reach and educate our children is in the school setting with adequate instruction.

We also know that physically fit students perform better academically:

- A study in the *Journal of School Health* found that physically fit kids scored better on standardized math and English tests than their less fit peers.
- Physical activity is linked to better concentration, reduced disruptive behaviors and higher test scores in reading, math and writing. (Delaware Department of Education, Nemours Health & Prevention Services, 2011)
- A study found that extending physical education from two days a week to daily was associated positively with academic achievement in math, reading and writing. (Ericsson, Motor Skills, Attention and Academic Achievements: An Intervention Study in School Years 1-3)
- In one report, second and third graders who got an extra 90 minutes of physical activity per week did better on a test of spelling, reading and math, along with gaining less weight over the next three years. (Want Your Kids to do Better in School? Try Exercise, 2012. The Chicago Tribune)

If there are any concerns about the public's support of physical education, the *Harvard Forum on Health* commissioned a study and found that 91% support more physical education in schools as a way to combat and prevent childhood obesity.

In a National Association for Sport and Physical Education survey of parents, 95% think a physical education curriculum should be part of the school experience for all students in grades K-12 and 76% think more school physical education could help control or prevent childhood obesity.

A Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan commissioned EPIC MRA poll of 600 registered Michigan voters in 2012 found that:

- **95 percent support students in K-5 having at least 30 minutes of physical education at least two days per week during the entire school year.**
- 87 percent support 6-8 grade students having a minimum of 45 minutes per day in physical education for at least one semester per year.

Slide 10 Physical Activity in Schools - Recommendation

We recommend setting a baseline standard to establish consistency between districts by requiring schools to:

- **Expand current recommendations to include charter schools, and full-day care programs.**
- **Establish a requirement of at least 90 minutes of quality physical education curriculum per week for the entire school year and at least 60 additional minutes of physical activity per week, grades K-8.**
- **Reduce sedentary time from the current recommendation of 2 hours to no more than one hour at any one time.**

While this will not meet the national recommendations, it will clearly be a step in the right direction. A step that will help us reduce obesity and, improve the health of our youngest citizens.

We understand the financial challenges of adding this requirement in our state, but also recognize the improvement in our children's healthy future and reduction in healthcare costs that can be achieved with this investment.

Slide 11 Built Environment

Creating communities, transportation systems, schools and buildings that make physical activity attractive and convenient provide health benefits, but also a range of other benefits (economic, environmental, social). Michigan has taken the lead with both the complete streets and safe routes to school policy. But more can be done.

In 2010, Michigan implemented the Complete Streets Legislation that considers all legal users of the roads, from public transportation riders and motorists, to bicyclists and pedestrians during transportation design.

Additional states that have recently taken a leadership role.

- Washington
 - HB 1071 – Creates a complete streets grant program.
 - HB 1175 - Appropriates \$39M to the pedestrian and bicycle safety program and Safe Routes to school program. The bill also directs the Office of Financial Management to study available data regarding statewide transit, bicycle and pedestrian trips, and recommend additional performance measure to increase transit ridership and bicycle and pedestrian trips.
- Minnesota
 - Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) – 181 Schools implemented Safe Routes to School or Walking School Bus Policies

Through 2014, at least 97 Complete Street policies or resolutions (25 written ordinances, 72 written resolutions of support) have been implemented throughout the state. The 2014 CDC State Indicator Report on Physical Activity, which provides information for each state on environmental and policy strategies that increase physical activity, highlighted Michigan's effort and leadership in this area.

In addition to Complete Streets, the Michigan School Board of Education encourages Active Commuting to/from school, encouraging students and staff members to safely walk or bike to school as often as possible.

Similarly, Safe Routes to School is a very inexpensive way to get more children moving on a daily basis. A generation ago we saw roughly 48% of school children walking and biking to school with only 12% being driven to school. Today those numbers have flipped, the average now is 45% of students being driven and only 15% are walking or biking.

Walking or biking to school can provide children with an average of 16 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA)/day. Schools can increase walking or biking to school by implementing programs such as Safe Routes to School and Walking School Bus Programs.

We have seen real success and in some communities this is being institutionalized at the school district level. Walking school buses are being implemented throughout Holt Public Schools where Walking School Bus leaders and corner captains help more than 300 students walk to elementary and middle school on a regular basis. Route leaders in Traverse City are heading bike trains at eight of their schools to increase ridership and teach bicycle safety.

Both of these programs are being spearheaded in coordination with the school district's transportation department and have resulted in a written active transportation plan that each district is implementing with local schools. The combination of programming and policy has created an environment that encourages active transportation and is helping to shift the culture so that walking and bicycling to school is the norm.

Slide 12 Built Environment - Recommendations

As Michigan rebounds, we should continue to re-invest in our communities, legislation like Complete Streets ensures we continue to invest in our communities and promote physical activity and health.

We recommend a “Health in all Policies” for work beyond the Health Policy Committee to assess the impact on health for all policy work.

We also recommend additional policies such as:

- Provide state funding for Safe Routes to School and Safe Routes for Non-Drivers to incentivize school districts to develop Active Transportation Plans and create easy ways to increase physical activity and shift the culture.
- Require school districts, during any capital school construction or improvement (renovation) project, to make accommodations for safe routes design and implementation.
- Strengthen or overhaul Michigan Motor Vehicle Code to clarify pedestrian crossing rights.
 - Safe pedestrian crossing at any crosswalk or intersection.
 - Require motorized vehicles to provide a safe distance when passing a bicyclist

Slide 13 Food Policy

Michigan has some of the largest and most diverse fruit and vegetable production in the nation, however, fewer than 1 in 5 Michigan adults at all income levels actually eat the minimum daily recommendation. Based upon our work with the SNAP-ED program, we have identified that pricing and access are two critical limitations to many communities.

We could recommend a number of policies such as

- Healthy Food and Beverage Access
- Farmer's Markets and Community Gardens
- Food Marketing limitations for children
- Restaurant Marketing and Menu Labeling
- Food Policy and Taxes

However, we are seeing the demand for MI fruits and vegetables increasing through social marketing and nutrition education programs, but access remains a significant barrier. We must continue to provide educational opportunities and promote healthier choices, however we must also ensure access to these healthier options at affordable prices.

One program, **The Healthy Corner Store Initiative** works to increase the availability and awareness of healthy foods in corner stores in Philadelphia through a multifaceted approach including:

- Increasing store capacity to sell and market healthy items in order to improve healthy options in communities
- Training and offering technical assistance to store owners to provide the skills to make healthy changes profitable
- Marketing healthy messages to youth and adults to encourage healthy eating choices
- Hosting in-store community nutrition education lessons
- Educating youth in schools near targeted corner stores to reinforce healthy messages and provide nutrition education.
- Linking corner store owners to community partners, local farmers and fresh food suppliers to create and sustain healthy corner stores.
- Offering free blood pressure checks and referrals by a health care provider to customers in select corner stores. These stores also receive in-store nutrition education lessons which include cooking demonstrations and free taste tests.

Slide 13 Food Policy - Recommendations

On such initiative is in Pennsylvania, The Fresh Food Financing Initiative (FFFI) a public-private partnership supports 88 projects, creating and preserving 5,000 jobs and 1.6 million sq ft in retail space focused on access.

We recommend a similar initiative in Michigan. We support the creation of a Healthy Food Financing Initiative to increase access to healthy foods in low and moderate income communities which demonstrate the greatest need according to USDA data.

A particular focus should be towards increasing the number of grocery retailers that offer healthy food in underserved urban and rural communities.

In addition, we should create a Healthy Corner Store initiative that increases the amount of healthy food being offered in existing convenience stores in these same communities, especially focused on Detroit and Michigan's rural areas.

Finally, we should focus on other areas of Healthy Food Access including production, distribution and also education to bolster demand for healthy foods.

Thank you again for this opportunity and we will be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

I would also like to extend an invitation to the Michigan Fitness Foundation Legislative Reception on May 19th from 4:30 to 6:30pm at Public Affairs Associates.

Thank you.

James J. Tighe
President & CEO
Michigan Fitness Foundation
Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports
(517) 908-3802
jjtighe@michiganfitness.org